

THE  
CLAN MACNAB



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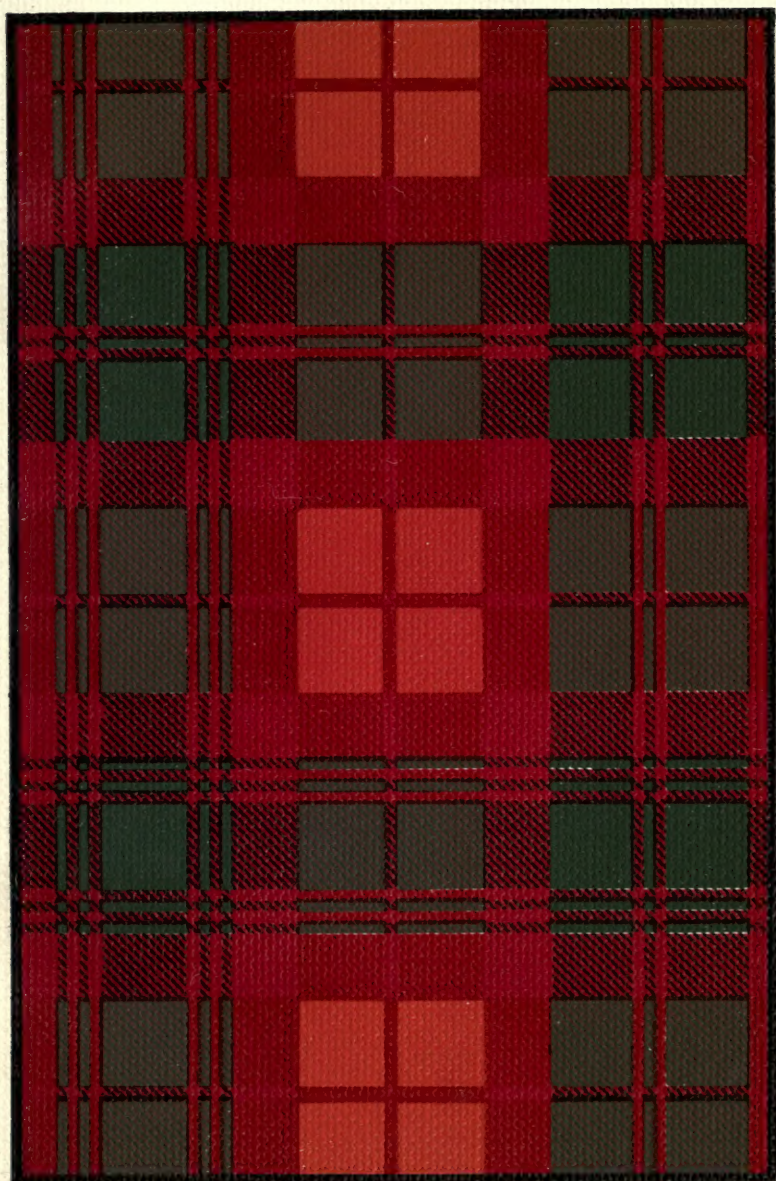


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# THE CLAN MACNAB

A SHORT SKETCH

BY

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PUBLISHED BY THE CLAN MACNAB ASSOCIATION

13 SOUTH CHARLOTTE STREET, EDINBURGH

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1907

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M335  
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GLASGOW:  
ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR,  
"Celtic Press,"  
47 WATERLOO STREET.

## PREFACE.

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IN these days when so much interest is taken in the revival of all matters of a Celtic character, a clear and concise statement of the history of the Clan Macnab cannot be considered out of place. This volume is the outcome of the decision of the Clan Macnab Association at one of its meetings, to ask Mr. John M'Nab of Callander to undertake the task of writing a history of the Clan. A complete and exhaustive history is not possible until the re-organisation of the Clan by the Association has made the collection of materials for that purpose easier than at present. Any attempt at compiling a more complete and exhaustive history has consequently been deferred to a later time, when the members of the Clan can more easily unite, through the medium of the Association, in attaining that purpose. Meanwhile, should this work be a means to that end, its mission is largely accomplished.

If due consideration be given to the present position of affairs, the wisdom of the limited scope of this work will be apparent. Since the emigration of Chief Francis to Canada, and the ultimate failure of his male issue, the Clan has not known whom to look to as the hereditary Chief, and from one cause and another, particularly through the Clan's active participation in the dynastic and other troubles which have from time to time disturbed the peace of the Scottish nation, its members have for a long time been scattered far and wide, its organisation destroyed, and the extensive lands, which once were the property of its Chiefs, have passed into the hands of strangers—indeed, were it not for the existence of the ancient burial ground at Inchbuie, an island on the river Dochart, the geographical position of the at one time extensive territory of the Macnabs would probably be unknown to a large number of the Clansmen of to-day.



## PREFACE.

Amongst other objects, the Clan Association aims at the revival of the study of the history of the Clan, and already, thanks to the kindness of the Marquis of Breadalbane, facilities are afforded to its members at the Annual Gatherings, to visit places and objects of interest to them.

This book, as already stated, is no attempt at a complete history, but it is hoped that it may assist in furthering the aims of the Association, and awaken in the hearts of the scattered Clansmen the feeling that they are descended from those who in their day worthily bore the name of Macnab, and as warriors had a share in the making of the history of Scotland.

R. A. M'N.



## HISTORY OF THE CLAN MACNAB.

THE Clan Macnab is acknowledged by all Highland historians and genealogists to be of very great antiquity, but unfortunately, its origin, like that of many others of our Scottish Baronial Houses, is lost in the mists of the by gone centuries.

There are several reasons to explain why this unsatisfactory state of affairs should exist. The Public Records of the country through stress of time and war have not been over-well preserved, and many valuable documents were destroyed when the monasteries were overthrown at the time of the Reformation.

To give in detail the various accounts of the early genealogy of the Macnabs would be entirely beyond the scope of this epitome of the history of the Clan.

In the 8th century (A.D.) St. Fillan founded the monastery of Strathfillan, and became its first abbot. From this centre he preached Christianity to surrounding tribes, and founded other ecclesiastical houses in Glendochart and Strathearn.

In course of time the ancestor of the Macnabs became Abbot of St. Fillan's Church. Under the Celtic system the office of abbot was hereditary, so there may have been several abbots in the family, but eventually there came one abbot in particular, who founded the Clan and whose descendants became lay abbots. This abbot flourished in the reign of King William the Lion, and held extensive possessions in Breadalbane and Strathearn, and was joined with the

Earl of Athole in the management of Argyllshire. The Act entrusting him with the rule over the rebellious families of that district is named Claremathane, and is to be found among the Scots Acts of Parliament in the time of King William.

He was succeeded by his son who was known as "*Mac-an-aba (Oighre)*," or son and heir of the abbot, a designation common to all the Macnab chiefs. His descendants had become a strong and numerous clan before the time of Alexander III.

In 1297 the Western Clans (of Perthshire and Argyllshire), under the leadership of Wallace, defeated and exterminated the Anglo Irish Army of M'Fadyean whilst advancing to seize Argyllshire for Edward I. of England.

In 1306 the Macnabs and their followers, along with the Macnaughtons, joined the Macdougalls of Lorn in their attack on the Bruce. The two parties met at Dalrigh, near Tyndrum, and in the conflict which ensued, the Macnabs, under their stalwart chief, Angus Mor, are said to have displayed great prowess and ferocity. It was in this battle that the celebrated brooch of Lorn was lost by the Bruce. Barbour speaks of Bruce's assailants as "*Makyn Dorsers*," and, if such they were, then they were followers of Macnab, as they were the hereditary door-keepers of St. Fillan's Church. The Lorn tradition varies somewhat from Barbour's account; but, strange to say, there was also a Macnab tradition which agreed with Barbour's version, and there was a Macnab brooch which was said to have been won from the Bruce. The tradition that is generally accepted as correct is, that Bruce was suddenly attacked by three powerful followers of Macnab. The King despatched



two of his opponents, and hurled the third backward ; but the man in falling seized the King's mantle or plaid, and to save himself the King was obliged to abandon his garment, and with it the brooch which secured it. It was a moment for haste, too, for Angus Mor was coming up in hot pursuit, and had he and the Bruce met in mortal combat, it is probable that Scottish history would have been changed. For Angus was herculean in stature and strength, and in swordsmanship he ranked with Wallace.

The Macnab brooch remained in the possession of the family of the Chief until the time of the Commonwealth, when it passed into the hands of the Campbells of Glenlyon, whose descendants retained it until a few years ago, when it was purchased for the British Museum.

Many of the place names in the neighbourhood of Dalrigh owe their origin to this battle. About this time Barbour ascribes to a Macnab the credit of seizing and delivering Christopher Seton, brother-in-law of Bruce, into the hands of the English.

In 1308 the cause of Bruce was prospering, and he resolved to wipe off all old scores against the Lord of the Isles and his allies. Collecting a strong force, he marched into Argyllshire in quest of his enemy. John, the son of Alexander Macdougall of Lorn, had timely notice of the King's intentions, and accordingly prepared to give him a warm reception. He posted his men and their allies in ambush in the Pass of Brander, where the road was so narrow that only one person could pass at a time. It was the scene of M'Fadyean's defeat ; but Bruce was acquainted with the country, and he was, moreover, an abler and a craftier soldier than the Irish adventurer. He divided

his force into two portions ; one of these he sent under Douglas to scale the heights which commanded the Highlanders' position, and the other he led in person into the Pass. The King, on entering the defile, was at once attacked by Lorn and his men, who hurled rocks and arrows upon his force. It seemed a critical moment, but Douglas, having reached his appointed place, in turn attacked the Highlanders, and threw them into confusion. The fighting was sternly contested, but eventually the allies had to seek safety in flight. They attempted to secure their retreat by breaking down a bridge over which they passed ; but in this endeavour they were foiled, as the victors were too close upon their steps. This defeat, sharp and decisive though it was, did not suffice to overthrow the power of the Macdougalls and Macnabs, nor did it subdue their martial ardour. For, in 1314, we find them once more along with the Comyns arrayed under the English Standard at Bannockburn. This latter defeat placed the Macnabs in a rather delicate position ; but concentrating their strength round a portion of their once great possessions, they were able to maintain themselves by their swords until the arrival of better and more tranquil times.

Bruce, after his triumph, granted the greater part of the Macnab lands to many of his loyal supporters, and also to certain ecclesiastical houses. The Dewars had seceded from the Macnabs after the battle of the Pass of Brander, and were in active opposition to them at Bannockburn. So, in the division of the Macnab lands, Bruce remembered their services, and granted them certain lands and privileges. It is interesting to note, that Charters for Glendochyre and Finlargis were granted to Alexander Menzies.

Although we find the Macdougalls and Macnabs thus harassing, or in turn harassed by Bruce, we must not regard them as utter traitors to their King and country. On the contrary, they are to be looked upon as loyal partisans, first of the Baliols ; and secondly, of the Comyns, whose claims to the Crown (through their Baliol blood) were prior to those of Bruce. Much of this opposition to Bruce must be set down to their horror of his sacrilegious slaughter of the Red Comyn in Dumfries.

It may be interesting at this stage to quote the genealogy of the Macnabs as given in the old Gaelic MS. of 1400-1467. It is as follows:—

Do Genealach mhic an aba egre—Gillamure mac Eogain mhic Aengusa mhic beathed mhic Aengusa mhic Gillamure loganaig mhic Ferchair mhic Finlace mhic Donnchaich mhic Firtiread mhic Gillafaelan mhic Gillamartan mhic Firtiread mhic Loairn mhic Ferchair mhic Cermac Airbeartaigh mhic Ere mhic Donnaill duin mhic Ferchair Abraruadh mhic Feradaig.

From 1314 until 1336, there is a blank in the history of the Clan. That it was a period of great stress and trouble is well known. To what straits the Macnabs were reduced at that time is shown by one tradition which asserts that at one time they, or the majority of them, were forced to take refuge in Inchbui, the picturesque island situated on the Dochart, near Killin, and which is known to the present day to the Macnabs, scattered as they are all over the world, as “The Burialplace.” From that position they were able to beat off all attacks, and eventually they emerged from those trials with a certain amount of success. For, in 1336, we find Gilbert Macnab of Macnab making his peace with King David II., and obtaining from that monarch a Charter under the Great Seal for the Barony of Bovain.



Heretofore, as we have seen, there has been little continuity in the annals of the Clan. That we are of old descent is abundantly proved. It is common knowledge, too, that we claim to have navigated, during the Deluge, an opposition boat of our own. The boast of one of our Chiefs, "that where Macnab sits is the head of the table," is now an old tale. But, as it is from the time of Gilbert that we have to deal with a continuous history, supported by well authenticated documents, it is to him that is generally conceded the style and honour of being the first chief of the Clan Macnab.

Of GILBERT MACNAB I., Chief, very little is known. He is without doubt identical with Gillamure, whose name is the first on the Macnab genealogy of 1400-1467. He would thus be grandson to Angus Mor, who had so ably aided the Comyn interests in the wars of the Bruce, and who is one and the same with Aengusa, whose name is the third on the genealogy. That Gilbert had some ability is proved by his being in a position to acquire a Charter, and that he had some foresight is shewn by his securing a Charter for Bovain. He died in the reign of Robert II., and was succeeded by his son, FINLAY II., who was designed of Macnab and Bovain. Of Finlay we know little, save that he flourished in the reign of Robert II. and Robert III., and died in the reign of James I. Some historians assert that he was a famous bard, and composed one of the poems which MacPherson attributed to Ossian. About this time the Macnabs had a feud with the Macgregors; it was occasioned, no doubt, by the loss of their lands during the War of Independence. The final battle took place in the vicinity of Crianlarich in 1426. The battle was fiercely contested, and

victory fell to neither side. So much reduced were the combatants by this encounter that Glenurghy, considering himself capable of over-powering them, actually obtained letters of fire and sword against the rival clans. In this instance, however, he had over-estimated his strength, for the Macnabs successfully resisted all his attempts to disposess them of their lands. Often in the years that followed did the successive lairds of Glenurghy renew their efforts to disposess the Macnabs of their lands, but during the good old fighting days, those attempts ended in failure and disaster. Finlay was succeeded in the Chieftianship by his son, PATRICK III., who was confirmed in 1467 in the Office of Ferbaloscip of Auchlyne, by the Prior of the Charter-House in Perth. Ten years later the Prior granted him a new Charter for Auchlyne, as the former one had been lost. In 1487 Patrick resigned his lands and Chieftianship to his son, FINLAY (IV.), who is said to have been a celebrated bard, and who is supposed to be identical with Finlay Macnab, and Finlay, the red-haired bard, whose names and some of whose works are mentioned in "*The book of the Dean of Lismore.*" It is strange how those three names should be considered as representing one person. For Finlay, the red-haired, was clearly a member of the Clan Gregor, and is stated to have been the family bard of Macgregor. The Macnab of that time could scarcely bring himself to play the *role* of bard to a rival chief.

At this time the Macnabs seem to have set about the recovery of those of their possessions which had been lost in their struggle with the Bruce. They became involved in a feud with the Dewars concerning certain relics of St. Fillan; and, at the same time,

they commenced that struggle with the Neishes which culminated, many years afterwards, in the defeat of the Clan Neish at the battle of Glenboulachan, about two miles north of the lower end of Loch Earn. The Dewars were neither numerous nor warlike, and in their extremity they applied to the Crown for protection. In 1487 they obtained a Charter confirming them in their possessions, and from that date they had no further trouble with the Macnabs. It was probably due to those clan feuds and his own advanced age, that Patrick resigned his honours to his son. Be that as it may, Patrick died at Auchlyne, in the year following his resignation in favour of his son.

In 1486 Finlay Macnab obtained a Charter from King James III., under the Great Seal, of the lands of Ardchyle and Wester Durnish, in Glendochart. Again, in 1502, he received from James IV. a Charter of the lands of Ewer and Leiragan, in Glendochart. At the same time he obtained from the Prior of the Carthusian Monastery at Perth a grant of a croft in Killin, paying, therefor, "Yearly to the parish of Killin three pounds of wax in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and St. Fillan, and All Saints, for the increase of St. Fillan's light before his image, one pound whereof at the Feast of St. Fillan in Summer, and another at the Feast of St. Fillan in Winter."

Soon after that date, Finlay died, in the reign of James IV., and was succeeded by his son, FINLAY (V., Chief), who seems to have been satisfied with merely safeguarding the property which had been recovered by his father. He appears as a witness to a Charter under the Great Seal to Duncan Campbell of Glenurghy, which is dated September 18th, 1511, and wherein he is designated "Finlaus MacNab





JOHN MACNAB, Esq., of Kinglassie, Fife,  
Glenmavis, Bathgate,  
First President of the Society



dominus de eodem." It was in the time of this Chief that the Neishes were at last defeated, and reduced to a small band of reckless outlaws. Mr. Christie, in one of his articles, quotes the following notice from the chronicle of Fothergill:—"Finlay MacNab of Bowayne, died at Illa Rayne, and he was buried at Killin, 13th April, 1525."

He was succeeded by his son, FINLAY (VI. Chief), who was evidently a man of another stamp, and who lacked the ability and energy of his father and grandfather. His mother, Mariot Campbell, was life-rented in the lands of Ewer and Leiragan, and on her death, in 1526, these lands passed to her second son, John, in terms of a Charter in his favour.

Finlay mortgaged the greater part of his estate to Colin Campbell of Glenurghy, under a Charter dated 24th November, 1552, and this Charter is confirmed by a Charter under the Great Seal from Mary, dated 27th June, 1553. It was from this transaction that Glenurghy claimed to have "conquessit the superiority of M'Nabb his hail landis." But that claim was never acknowledged by the Macnabs.

In the records of the Privy Council of Scotland, 1552, we find mention is made of a member of the Clan, a certain Allister Macnab. In that year the Council gave orders for the raising of a body of Scottish soldiers to assist the King of France in his wars. Two regiments of Highland foot soldiers were included in the composition of this force, and among those who were enrolled was Allister Macnab. Who this Allister was, and what was his ultimate fate, we are not informed; but in all probability he was some near connection of the Chief.



On August 27th, 1578, at Stirling Castle, Colin Campbell of Ardbaith, became caution for Allister Barryth Macnab, son of Allister Macnab, that he would appear upon the third day of the next Justice Air of the Sherifffdom of Perth, or sooner elsewhere upon fifteen days' warning to underlye the law for all crimes that may be imput to him. About this time the Macnabs had, apparently, been bringing themselves within the reach of the law. In the "Roll of the Clannis (in the Hiellands and Isles), that her Capitaines, Cheffis, and Chieftaines, quhome on they depend oft tymes agais the willis of their landislordis, and of sum special persons of branchis of the saidis Clannis, 1587," we find mention is made of the "M'Nabbis."

Patrick Dow M'Nab, Wester Ardnagald, is one of the witnesses to a Bond of Manrent between the Fletchers of Auchallader and Duncan Campbell of Glenurghy, dated "at Finlarig, 8th November, 1587." Ardnagald is now a portion of the farm of Bovain, in Glendochart.

The M'Nabbis are also named in the Roll of the broken Clans in the Highlands and Isles, 1594, in an act "for the punishment of theft, reiff, oppression, and soirning."

Finlay, the Mortgager, was succeeded by his son, FINLAY (VII. Chief), who entered into a bond of friendship and manrent with his kinsman Lauchlan Mackinnon of Strathordell, on July 12th, 1606. This bond is dated at Uir, and is witnessed by "James MacNabb, Robert MacNabb, Duncan Dow MacNabb, Archibald MacNabb, Gibbie MacNabb, John MacDhonnell reuich, and Ewan Mackinnons, with uthers," and is signed "Lauchland Mise (*i.e.*, myself) Mac Fingon."

Finlay married Catherine Campbell, daughter of the laird of Glenurghy, and had a family of twelve stalwart sons, of whom the weakest is said to have been able to drive his dirk through a two-inch board.

In 1610 two hundred chosen men of the Campbells, Macnabs, Macdonalds, and Camerons, attacked and defeated a great number of Macgregors at Bintoich. The Macgregors fled to Ranefray, in Glenorchy, where they were again overtaken and overcome by their foes. Seven men of the pursuers were killed, whilst twenty of the Macgregors were slain, along with five of their chief men. At Bintoich fell Patrick Dow Mor Macnab of Acharn.

At Christmas tide, 1612, Macnab sent some of his clansmen to the neighbouring town of Crieff to purchase the necessary stores for the approaching festivities. On their homeward way, the Macnabs were ambushed by a party of the Neishes, who sallied from their island fortalice in Loch Earn, and captured the supplies. Dire was the wrath of Chief and Clansmen when the plundered messengers returned to Eilean Ran and reported their mishap. Enraged, as the Macnabs were, they could think of no method by which they could punish the reivers. In the evening the twelve strong sons of Macnab were assembled in the hall of Eilean Ran and busily engaged in planning some signal vengeance on their foes, when their father entered and said in Gaelic:—"Si an nochd an oidhche nam b'iad na gillean na gillean"—"This night is the night if the lads were the lads." In an instant the twelve lads were on their feet and arrayed in their war gear. Then hurrying down to the waterside they crossed the stream and took up the family barge, which they bore on their

shoulders across the hills to Loch Earn, by way of Glentarken. Having reached the loch, they launched their boat and rowed to the island, where the robbers were holding their carousal with the stolen supplies. On their arrival at the island the grim avengers sunk all the boats in the little harbour, and then proceeded to the habitation of the Neishes. In the keep was a scene of revelry and confusion, for holding all the boats on the loch in their own keeping, the Neishes deemed their hold to be impregnable. Strange, therefore, must have been the thoughts which passed through their minds, when loud above the din of their noisy mirth they heard a sharp and sudden knocking at the outer door. Immediately their noisy merriment ceased, all became silent, and then in a quavering voice the terrified Neish demanded the name and mission of the one who had thus disturbed their orgy. Swiftly came the answer, "*Iain Min*, or "*Smooth John*," the heir of Macnab, and the strongest and fiercest man in all Braidalbin. With that stern voice sounding in his ears, and with a foreboding of his doom rising before him, the Neish replied, "*Iain Min*." Sharp through the midnight air came again that grim voice:—"Then I am he, but rough enough I'll be this night." Trusting in the strength of the stout door the robbers attempted to treat for terms. But spurning all thought of parleying, *Iain Min*, with one swift blow sent the door reeling off its hinges; and next instant he and his brothers were dealing death to the hereditary foes of their House. The Neishes, surprised and demoralised by the rapidity and ferocity of their assailants, offered but little resistance. When the fighting, if such it can be called, was over, there



remained of the Neishes but two survivors. One was a young lad who had succeeded in concealing himself in time to avoid the vengeance which overtook his family. The other was a female child who escaped the notice of the Macnabs by being under an overturned cradle. Their task having been accomplished, the young Macnabs secured the gory head of the Neish as a trophy of their victory. They then recovered their boat and retraced their journey of the previous night. Ere they left Glentarken they abandoned their boat as it retarded the news of their triumph. The boat was never removed from the place where it was left by the Macnabs, and men born within the past century have talked with men who have viewed its well-bleached fragments. Some time early in last century a portion of the keel was dug out of the moss in which it was embedded. Part of it was given to Mrs. MacNaughton who lived near St. Fillans, and she had it made into a bicker and a walking stick. She was Margaret Macnab, daughter of James Macnab, Milmore, near Killin, and was known as "Margaret Innishewen." The bicker and certain Macnab heirlooms which belonged to her father are still preserved by her descendants. But this is a digression from our narrative. In the morning the chief was delighted to find that the mission of vengeance had been successful. The proof was convincing when *Iain Mìn* cast Neish's head at his feet and said in Gaelic, "*Na biodh fiamh oirbh,*" or dread nought. And Macnab acknowledged as he received the gruesome trophy that the night had been the night and the lads were the lads.

From this deed are derived the modern arms of the Macnabs. There is a local tradition to the effect that but three of the sons took part in the enterprise, and

that the chief in giving the signal for the attack on the Neishes only acted at the instigation of his wife who had some real or fancied cause of grievance against the three eldest sons. It is said that she hoped that they would be slain so that her favourite son should be heir to the estates. And according to the same tradition, the three sons were by an earlier marriage. History, however, makes no mention of a second wife.

In 1633 there is an act in favour of the Laird of Glenurghy granting him certain lands in the Lordship of Glendochart and elsewhere. About 1640 a battle was fought on the hills above Killin, between the followers of Angus Og XVI., of Keppoch, and a body of Braidalbin men consisting of Campbells, Macnabs, and Menzies. There appears to be some doubt as to the cause of the contest. One version is that Angus was on his homeward way from a foray in Stirlingshire and intended to "lift" the Glenurghy cattle in passing. Another version states that the foray was one in retaliation for a raid made into Keppoch in the previous year by the Braidalbin men. Whatever may have been the *casus belli* Finlarig was the scene of marriage festivities when Angus was first despoiled, but chief and clansman promptly forsook the groaning board to try their fortunes in the field. The fight was brief, but sanguinary, and was won by the Braidalbin men, who, by their superior knowledge of the ground, had their foes at a disadvantage. The Keppoch men managed to save their booty, but so closely were they pursued by the victors that they were obliged to leave Angus Og, sorely wounded, in a shealing where he was afterwards discovered and slain by a Campbell.

There is a tradition that Finlay Macnab outlived his stalwart son, and died at an advanced age after the

battle of Worcester—1653 is given as the date of his death. But as John certainly acted as chief, and as he is styled the Laird of Macnab in several state papers, we are therefore entitled to regard him as the VIII. chief.

John Macnab (Iain Mìn) who married Mary Campbell, daughter of Duncan Campbell, Laird of Glenlyon, and by her he had a son Alexander, and a daughter Agnes who married Captain Alexander Campbell, of the House of Achallader.

During the civil war the chief, with the majority of his clansmen, fought for the royal cause. Joining Montrose after the battle of Alford, Macnab remained with him until after the battle of Kilsyth, when he was commissioned by his leader to defend the Castle of Kincardine. The castle held out until the 14th day of March, 1646, and was then abandoned by its defenders through lack of food and water. Macnab and his servant were captured, but the rest of the garrison escaped in the sally.

In December, 1645, whilst many of the clansmen were holding Kincardine, Campbell of Ardkinglass collected a strong body of Argyllshire men and raided Glendochart. There he was joined by the Glenorchy Campbells and the disaffected Menzies and Stewarts. Unable to stem the force of this motley host, a small party of Macgregors and Macnabs captured the Castle of Edinample from its owner, Colin Campbell, and therein they fortified themselves. Whilst the covenanting force lay around the castle, Montrose, who was then in Strathspey, was notified of the state of affairs around Lochearn, and he promptly gave orders to his kinsman Graeme of Inchbrakie to raise a body of Athole men and advance against the besiegers. His



commands were carried out by Inchbrakie, whose sudden appearance alarmed the whigs and forced them to seek safety in flight. Reinforced by the small party in the castle, Inchbrakie moved in pursuit of the Campbells and overtook them at Callander. Having crossed the Teith at that place the fugitives rallied under the belief that they could hold the fords of the river against their pursuers. But Graeme speedily undeceived them, for splitting up his force and sending a small party to attack the enemy in front while a stronger body crossed by a ford higher up the river, he attacked the whigs in front and flank and rooted them from their position. The defeated force scattered in almost all directions and fled by devious ways towards Stirling, and so hotly were they pursued by Graeme that the pursuit ceased only when they were within a mile of that town.

About this time the names of several Macnabs occur in the Scots Acts of Parliament. In an Act of exemption, in 1649, is the name of a certain John Baine M'Nab. In 1650 there is a supplication from Jonat Campbell, relict of John M'Nab, anent the adjustment of her umphile husband's compts. In the same volume (vi.) there are the names of Capt. John M'Nab, keeper of Garth, and Capt. Wm. M'Nab.

Macnab and his servant after being captured in the sally from Kincardine were conveyed to Edinburgh, and there they were thrown into the castle. After a brief trial Macnab was condemned to death, but on the night previous to the day fixed for his execution he escaped from the castle and made his way back to Glendochart.

In 1650 Charles II. was received by the Scots, and amongst those who joined his standard was John



Commander JOHN MACNAB, Royal Naval Reserve,  
First Vice-President of the Society.





Macnab with 300 of his men. On the 3rd of September, 1651, Macnab was slain at the battle of Worcester, and was succeeded by his son

ALEXANDER (IX CHIEF), then a boy of about four years of age. At this time the Campbells, taking advantage of the popularity of the Chief, and the unsettled state of the country, plundered the lands of the Macnabs, and destroyed the castle of Eillean Rou. They also took away many of the heirlooms of the family. All this was done under the name of justice, and to enable Glenurghy to make up losses sustained by him at the hands of the Macnabs. The order authorising this travesty of justice was granted to Glenurghy by General Monk, and dated from Dalkeith on the 21st November, 1654. Campbell of Glenlyon, who was brother of Macnab's widow, was one of the foremost leaders in this raid. The widow was obliged to petition General Monk for a portion of her late husband's lands by which she could support herself and her children. Monk wrote to Captain Gascoigne, who commanded the troops of the Commonwealth stationed at Finlarig, and on the 18th of the same month another letter was written by Monk to Glenurghy "desiring him to forbear to trouble the widow of the deceased laird of M'Nab, as she has paid sesse and lived peaceably since her husband's death." This protection was also given to "Archibald MacNab of Agharm." Nothing came of those letters until the Restoration in 1661.

Alexander married a sister of Sir Alexander Menzies of Weem by whom he had

ROBERT (X CHIEF) who married Anne Campbell. Robert Macnab accompanied Glenurghy in his expedition against Caithness (1680-1681), and took part

in the series of battles which culminated in the total defeat of the Caithness men at Altimarloch, three miles from the town of Wick.

During the time of this Chief a robber on his way home from a creach in Strathearn was met at the south end of the Bridge of Dochart by Macnab who refused to allow him to pass through the Macnab Lands. The robber drew his sword and so furious was his attack that Macnab was obliged to give way before him ; but Donald Mandach Macnab in the Sliochd of Kinnell taking his chief's place forced the robber to surrender his sword and give up his booty. The creach thus recovered was restored to the plundered victims in Strathearn.

Among the Government documents of 1678 is a "list of the names of the Heads and branches of families that are to come to Inverlochry and give bond to the Commissioners of Council betwixt and on the twenty day of November next," and first on the list is Archibald MacNab of Aucharn ; 3rd on the list is Finlay M'Nab of Innis Ewen, and 4th last on the list is James M'Nab in the Kirkton of Strathfillan.

It was probably about that time that a robber who lurked among the rocks at the head of Glenogle and preyed upon unwary travellers was met and slain by a member of the Clan.

In 1714 (March 13-22) James MacNab was prosecuted for the slaughter of one MacHomish by the sword.

During the brief Campaign of the "Fifteen" the Earl of Breadalbane and his brother-in-law Macnab of Macnab remained at home, but their respective clans are reported to have been "out" for the House of Stewart. At that time the Jacobites had a large

permanent Camp in Strathfillan; and in 1719 a body of Highlanders from that Camp marched north to Glenshiel where they joined a party of Spanish troops and fought against the Government forces under General Whightman. The Highlanders claimed to have beaten the Government forces; but shortly afterwards the Spaniards, disheartened by their wild surroundings, were glad to surrender.

In 1724 General Wade moved through the Highlands making his roads and collecting the arms of the Clans. Next year he called upon the Macnabs to surrender their arms, but in this instance he had to content himself with a refusal.

Throughout the troubles of the "Forty-five" the Chief and his own immediate family were staunch supporters of the Government. John Macnab his eldest son fought as a Captain of the 42nd Regiment at Prestonpans where he was taken prisoner by the Jacobites and committed to Doune Castle for safe keeping.

The Clan at large under Alexander Macnab of Innishewen, Archibald Macnab of Acharn and Alan Macnab of Dundurn fought for the Stewarts. Donald MacNab, Brae Leing (sic), is the only Macnab whose name is given in the "Lists of Rebels" supplied to the Government by the Supervisors of Excise. He was a younger brother of Macnab of Innishewen. That other Macnabs were not named in the "Lists" is due to the fact that in those days Glendochart was beyond the reach of the Law and Excise.

After Culloden some of the Soldiers stationed at Finlarig set out to burn the house of Corrychaoroch on the north side of Benmore. As they reached their destination they were observed by a member of the



Innisewen family who divining their object placed himself under cover and opened fire on them and so unerring was his aim that seven (or as some reports say nine) soldiers fell ere the others abandoned their task as impossible.

When the government troops were scouring the Braes of Balquhiddy in search of Jacobites the daughter of Finlay Macnab in Craighuie is said to have saved the life of Stewart of Glenbuckie who was then an infant, by carrying him to a place of concealment in the hills.

In the Appendix to Chambers History of the Rebellion there are several references to Alexander Macnab of Innishewen, in the papers of Murray of Broughton Secretary to Charles.

According to M'Lay's Rob Roy, "the Grants Mackinnons, Macnabs and Mackays and others who had departed from the M'Gregors held several conferences with them in 1748 (during a meeting which lasted for fourteen days in Athole) for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to repeal the attainder that hung over them, but some disagreement having taken place among their chiefs as to the general name under which all of them should again be rallied, their meetings and resolutions were broken off and no further notice taken of the proposal."

Robert MacNab had a numerous family but only two sons survived him. They were John who became eleventh Chief (after referred to), and Archibald who died at Edinburgh 2nd January 1790 and was buried at Inchbui. Archibald followed the profession of arms and his Commissions date, as ensign in the 43rd Regiment raised in May 1740; as Captain in Loudon's Highlanders 1745; as Major in John Campbell of Duntroons Highlanders 1757; and Lt.-Colonel in 1777.



E. ROLLAND McNAB, Esq., J.P., S.S.C., Edinburgh,  
First Secretary of the Society.





He served in the Wars in Europe and America, and was at the taking of Quebec. At the time of his death he was a Lieutenant-General.

Of the Kinnell ladies of this time one, Anne, married John Stewart 7th of Fasnacloich; another named Christian married Alan Stewart of Innerhadden 2nd son of Rev. Duncan Stewart of Innerhadden and Strathgarry. Another daughter is said to have married a member of the Dundurn family. Patrick Campbell son of Duncan the disinherited, and Patrick Campbell XXI of the House of Craignish are also said to have taken their wives from the family of Kinnell. One of the 151 Witnesses called by the Crown in the Trial of James Stewart of the Glens in 1752 for the murder of Colin Campbell of Glenure, was Anne Roy MacNab, daughter to the deceased Alexander MacNab, who was brother to John Macnab, of Bovain.

JOHN MACNAB XI. Chief married Jean Buchanan only sister of Francis Buchanan laird of Arnprior who was executed at Carlisle in 1746.

Anne Campbell widow of Robert MacNab of Macnab died at Lochdochart 6th September 1765.

Pennant in his Tour of 1769 mentions that "in Glenurghy dwells M'Nab a smith whose family have lived in that humble station since the year 1440 being always of the same profession.

The first of the line was employed by the lady of Sir Duncan Campbell who built the Castle of Kilchurn when her lord was absent. Some of their tombs are in the Churchyard of Glenurghie; the oldest has a hammer and other implements of his trade cut on it."

These Smiths were famed for the manufacture of swords, Highland dirks and *sgian dubhs*—the temper and style of blade being unrivalled.

John Macnab died at Kinnell 19th February 1778 aged 80 years and was survived by his widow, two sons and two daughters. His sons were Francis who succeeded him, and Robert who was a Doctor and married Anne Maule. His daughters were Elizabeth and Marjory, of whom one married—Dick Miller, Esq., and the other married Colonel Campbell of Balyveolan.

FRANCIS MACNAB XII Chief was quite a celebrity in his day. In stature and appearance he was a man cast in nature's largest mould, and his strength was enormous. He was strong in will, and was witty and original in his ideas. At one time he was a farmer on a large scale, and his extensive holdings stretched from the "Varied realms of fair Menteith" to his own rugged scenery of Glendochart and Lochtayside. Humorous and eccentric he might be; but he was beloved by his clansmen, and well might it be so, for he was a typical Macnab, and the ideal of what a Highland chief should be. He was of a humane disposition, and many of his kindly deeds as well as his witty sayings are still treasured in the memories of those whose forefathers claimed kinship or acquaintance with him. As a Justice of the Peace for Perthshire, he was ever sympathetic with the poor, and remarkably subtle in his decisions. It was to his foresight in the early years of last century that Callander owes its famous "Dreadnought Hotel." His many business ventures kept him in a state of perpetual worry; and to the cares of business he added the excitement of several good going law pleas.

At Fuentes d' Onora (Almeida) on May 3rd, 1811, Lieutenant Allan MacNab, died of his wounds, and to his memory a small tablet was inserted in the wall of the enclosure at Inchbui by his cousin, Archibald

MacNab. In Messrs. W. & A. Keith Johnston's Work on the Clans, published some years ago Allan is erroneously named Francis Maximus MacNab. Francis Maximus was a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh and the author of several works. He and Allan were half brothers.

Dr. Robert MacNab, brother of the Chief, and styled of Bovain, died at Killin, June 8th 1814, and was buried at Inchbui.

Anne Maule MacNab, daughter of Dr. Robert MacNab, and wife of R. Jamieson, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh, died in Edinburgh 4th October 1814.

According to Bishop Gleig's "Lists" the following Macnabs were present at Waterloo:—

30 Regt. Foot 2nd Batt. (Cambridge) Captain M'Nab, killed. 52 Regt. Foot 1st Batt. (Oxfordshire) Ensign J. MacNab. Commissariat D. Macnab.

During those warlike times several members of the Clan served with honour in various parts of the world. Among those who fought in India were Captain James and Captain Robert Macnab who were of the House of Kinnell and were brothers to Allan MacNab who died at Almeida.

Robert was in the Buffs and on two occasions saved the Colours.

Francis Macnab died at Callander, Perthshire, in his 82nd year, May 25th 1816. After his death several sketches of his sayings and doings appeared in *Chamber's Journal*, and the *Literary Gazette*, and even at this late date anecdotes concerning him crop up in the Press. Many of the modern tales however are utterly spurious.

He was succeeded in the Chieftainship by his nephew ARCHIBALD MACNAB XIII. Chief, who was son of Dr



Robert Macnab of Bovain. In early life Archibald had studied law, and on succeeding to the estates, he combined the profession of a private banker with his duties as a chief and landed proprietor. He married a Miss Robertson whose father was a Writer to the Signet, and one of the Clerks in the Register House, Edinburgh. By her he had eight children of whom but one Sarah Ann survived him ; the others all died in infancy. His speculations turned out disastrously, and in order to make ends meet he was obliged to dispose of some of his lands. But his troubles increased, and owing to his own folly and extravagance his creditors, of whom Lord Breadalbane was the principal one, were forced to take strong measures against him in order to protect their own interests. They obtained a decree from the Court of Session, and for some time the Chief was a fugitive from Justice. In 1821 he and many of his clanspeople emigrated to Canada where he had obtained a land grant. His changed condition carried no lesson to the Chief, and in Canada he proceeded to live over again his old life of foolish extravagance.

In 1828 the old estate of the Macnabs passed from the family in virtue of a Decreet from the Court of Session.

In Canada his tenants imbibed the Western air of freedom and soon began to object to his control over their land. Troubles multiplied and by 1837, the year of the Rebellion, they were in open revolt against his authority, and refused to enlist in the regiment he was commissioned to raise. His kinsman, Allan Napier M'Nab of Dundurn, Hamilton, Ontario, was more fortunate, and prompt suppression of the Rebellion was due mainly to his energetic measures.



Mrs. OGILVY REID.





In recent years there have been several articles written on Macnab; but they showed in most instances a decided bias against the Chief. Faults he certainly had, but at the same time it ought to be remembered that he had also many good qualities, and that his opponents were not wholly free from blame.

In 1853 Macnab returned to Europe and after revisiting his native land retired to the Continent, where he died at Lannion, Côtes-du-Nord, Bretagne, France, 12th August, 1860, aged 83. Like all his predecessors he was stately in appearance, and courtly and affable in his manner; he was strong willed and of a proud passionate disposition. He lacked the great stature and strength of his uncle Francis, and he lacked that uncle's grim regard for the lands and honour of Macnab. Whilst he was a bitter and relentless foe he was kindly disposed to the needy and hospitable to all who entered his house. With him passed away the last acknowledged Chief of the Clan. His widow died at Florence in 1868; and his daughter Sarah Ann who styled herself of Macnab and wore the triple plumes denoting the headship of the Clan, died at the same place in January, 1894.

Sprung from the Macnabs, and of collateral descent with them, are the Macnairs, a family well known in certain parts of Perthshire. Their ancestor simply dropped the Macnab from the old designation of "Macnab Oighre," and retained the latter portion of Oighre or Eyre (Heir) as his surname. The Macnairs are mentioned on the records in the 14th century.

\* \* \*

In the various accounts of the Macnabs of Macnab we find that they intermarried with the families of Lord

Gray of Kinfauns, Graeme of Inchbrakie, Drummond of Balloch, Robertson of Struan, and Haldane of Gleneagles.

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## SEPTS OF CLANN AN ABA.

MacNabs, MacNabbs, Macnabs, MacNairs, Macnairs, M'Nabs, M'Nabbs, M'Nairs, Abbots, Abbotsons, Abbotts, certain Dewars, Dows, Gows, Baines, Gilfillans, Macgowans, M'Clagans, M'Intyres, &c.

## DESIGNATION OF CHIEF.

Mac an Aba, Oighre, or son and heir of the Abbot, MacNab, The M'Nab, M'Nab of M'Nab, MacNab of Bovain.

## CADETS.

Aucharn, Dundurn, Innishewen, Strathfillan, Suie, Newton, Cowie, Jamaica, &c.

## FAMILY SEAT.

Anciently Eilean Ran, at the junction of the Dochart and Loch Tay, modern residence dating from the time of the Commonwealth, Kinnell.

## BANNER.

The Green one common to the Clans of the Siol Alpin Confederacy.

## ARMS.

Sa. on a Chev. Ar. 3 Crescents vert. in base an open boat in a Sea ppr.

## CREST.

A Savage's head affrontee ppr.

## MOTTO.

“Na bitheadh fiamh oirbh,” or “Bitheadh eagal fada bho gach duine,” Dreadnought, *Timor Omnis abesto*.

## SUAICHEANTAS OR BADGE.

Ruiteag, Roebuck berry (*Rubus saxatilis*, Stone bramble).

## CATH-GHAIRM OR WARCRY.

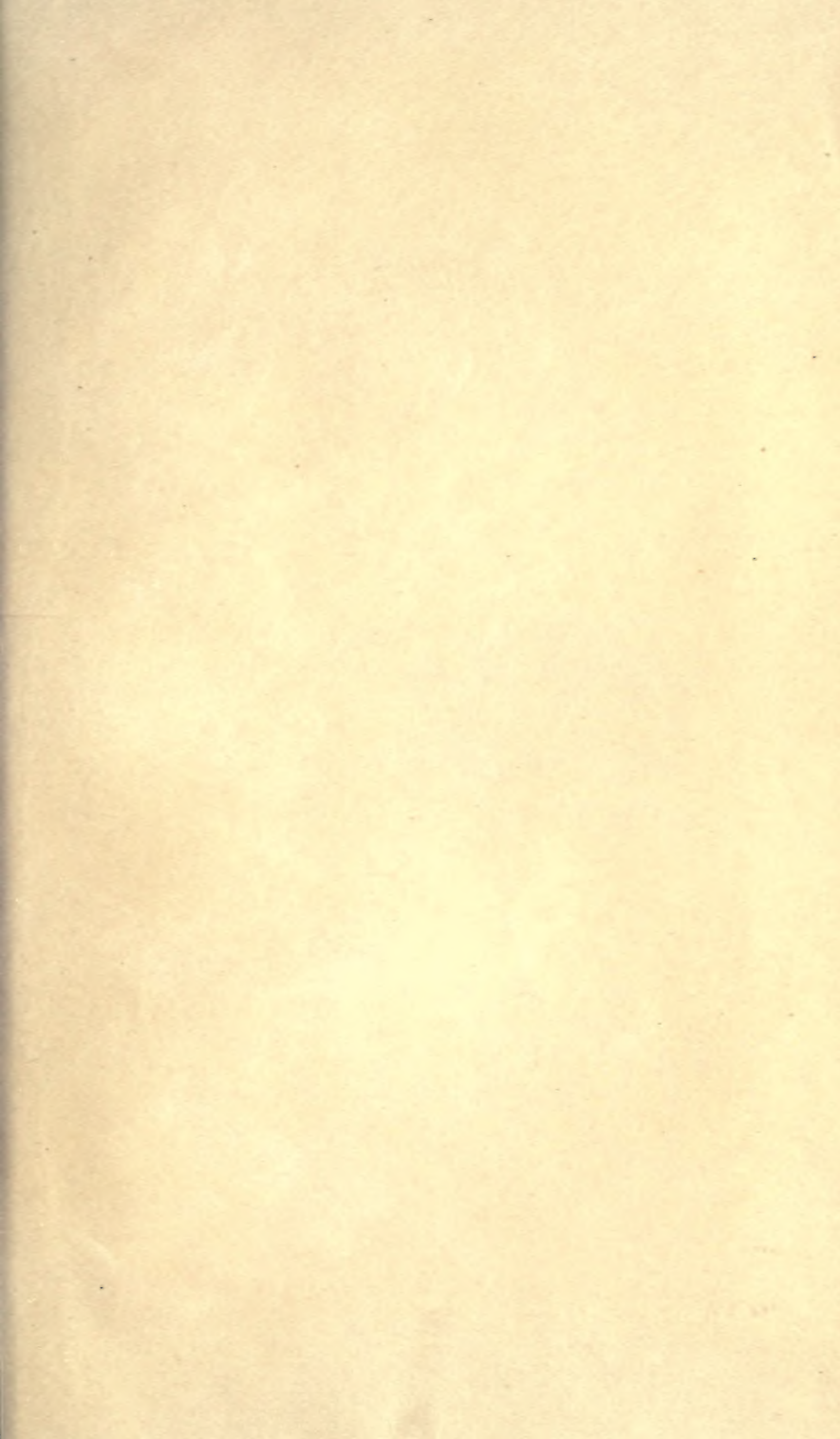
## PIPE MUSIC.

“Fàilte Mhic an Aba,” or Macnab’s Salute. “Co-thional Chloinn an Aba,” The Gathering of the Clan Macnab. The March of the Clan Macnab. The Retreat of the Clan Macnab.













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McNab, John  
The clan Macnab

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